

How precious these churches must be to Him, that they are never forsaken and never forgotten! Their ministry, the seven stars, may be weak and unworthy, but He abideth the same. Their light may fail, but He remains with all the unfailing store of the Spirit's oil. And He walks among the churches, as knowing them, honoring their mission, ready to hear and ready to give. What a splendid picture! Human societies have their leaders. Schools have their teachers. Governments have their kings and rulers. Armies have their generals. But the Church has its Christ of God, who is all the light and power and glory of the whole Church of God on earth. Let us look only to the Unseen Presence of Him who all the days walketh among the Golden Candlesticks!

THE TEXAS BREWERS' OFFER.

The Texas brewers have proposed to give one hundred thousand dollars to charity on condition that it be proved that less beer is sold in "dry" territory than in "wet," if the local optionists will do the same if the contrary be proven. They also propose to bear the expense of two commissions, one to operate in the State and the other out of the State, to investigate and decide the matter. All of which is pure and unadulterated bluff, characteristic of the liquor interests. In the first place it is a species of gambling or betting, in which those who are contending for the elevation of the morals of the country do not engage. In the next place, the anti-saloonists have not the money for a forfeit or for charity handy and ready in large sums. They are not conducting a business which produces enormous profits and which will easily stand a draft of a hundred thousand or so, a sum which is a mere bagatelle to the saloon or brewery interests. In the next place, they are not disposed to engage in a "bet" where not only are all the odds against them through the manipulation of the brewers' figures and statements but where, even if they could "win" the brewers' forfeit, it would be blood money seeking to be sanctified by charitable use. And after all, the proposition itself is illogical and absurd. Even though the rich brewers, grown fat on the appetites of men for drink, can afford to spend large sums of money recklessly, they are not known to do it often. Their sincerity is never to be relied upon. And why, again, if prohibition does not prohibit, are they so anxious to interfere, and at heavy cost, with a condition of things which brings greater profit to their pockets? If they honestly believe that more beer is sold in prohibition territory than in open territory, who will credit them with sincerity in wishing to remove the restrictions which are inuring to their benefit? They are not so given to benevolence as to be willing to part with any sum, large or small, for the sole purpose of argument or to induce people to remove restrictions and thereby actually hurt the beer trade!

Great opportunities and great difficulties often lie close together. Opportunity does not mean ease in accomplishment. It is the opening of the entrance to a way that may be arduous and painful. No great results were ever wrought out apart from effort and struggle.

FOR A UNION OF CHURCHES.

At the recent Annual Council of the Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, held in Leesburg May 26-28, the following resolution was offered, and without debate, was unanimously adopted by the 150 Lay and Clerical Delegates there present.

Whereas, the Church of Christ today, in all parts of the world, is manifestly impressed by the serious results of the unhappy divisions among Christian people, and in view of the fact that many of the churches have been stimulated to prayer that these divisions may in some way be healed, and that the Master's prayer, "That they all may be one," may be realized; and, considering the general and hopeful efforts that are being made by the Protestant churches to accomplish this object, not only by conference and council, but by federation when possible, and in some cases by actual organic union—

Resolved, That this Council expresses its grateful acknowledgements to Almighty God for the progress made toward a united Brotherhood in Christ, and its earnest prayer for further expressions of unity, until the reunited Church, the Body of Christ, as our blessed Lord conceived it be fully accomplished; and,

Resolved further, That in an humble effort to do our part to help on this happy consummation, we do appoint a Committee of Conference, consisting of the bishop of the Diocese, three clergymen and three laymen, to confer with our brethren of the other churches, looking towards methods and suggestions for further affiliation; that this committee meet at least twice a year for conference, and that it report to the annual Council of the Diocese.

Just what is meant, or what is hoped for by this amiable and fraternal action, we do not know. Certainly it will be received and considered with courtesy and fraternal spirit by any of the Church Assemblies to which it is sent. But the council of the diocese of Virginia is not the Superior Court of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, which alone could enter into conference and union with other churches.

Perhaps this proposition for a conference with "the brethren of the other churches" might well have been addressed as a petition to the General Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The brethren of the Episcopal Church have in late years been again and again moved to make overtures to other religious bodies. But on each of these occasions it has appeared in conference that there was the re-affirmation of the distinctive views of the Episcopal Church quite well known to all. It would seem that these brethren forget or for some reason choose to ignore the fact that their brethren of the other Churches have convictions and are conscientious before God as to their principles of Church polity, the ministry and the sacraments.

Most heartily do we believe in the true spiritual unity of the Church of Christ, and acknowledge the obligation to exhibit that unity before the world. We rejoice in any expression of the oneness of all followers of Christ. We would pray for the day we shall be brought to see eye to eye, and march in one body to the conquest of the world.

No one can rejoice in the Lord who has not suffered with him. The most exquisite joy known to man is that which comes as the result of a sudden cessation of great agony. Therefore to refuse suffering for Christ's sake is to turn our backs upon the only true joy.